CLAIMS

1) A method of feeding a continuous strip (2) of packing material and a tear -off ribbon (3) to a user machine (4), the method comprising the steps of unwinding said continuous strip (2) and said tear -off ribbon (3) simultaneously off respective reels (7, 13); feeding the continuous strip (2) and the tear -off ribbon (3) at the same speed along respective paths (6, 12) extending through a joining station (23); joi ning the continuous strip (2) and the tear -off ribbon (3) to each other at said joining station (23) to form a composite strip (25) of packing material; and feeding the composite strip (25) to said user machine (4) via first traction means (35) which exert a first pulling force (F1) on the continuous strip (2) and tear-off ribbon (3) via the composite strip (25); and being characterized by comprising the further step of exerting, simultaneously with and in addition to said first pulling force (F1) and by me ans of second traction means (28, 29), a second pulling force (F2) on a portion (36) of said tear -off ribbon (3) extending between the relative said reel (13) and said joining station (23).

2) A method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said second pulling for ce (F2) is exerted by winding said portion (36) of tear -off ribbon (3) about a pulley (28), and applying to the pulley (28) a given drive torque (M) in the same direction as a travelling direction of said portion (36) of tear -off ribbon (3) to the joining

station (23).

3) A method as claimed in Claim 2, wherein said pulley (28) is speed -controlled to impart to the pulley (28) a peripheral speed equal to the travelling speed of the tear-off ribbon (3).

4) A method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the sum of said first and said second pulling force (F1, F2) is a pulling force (F3) at least sufficient to unwind said tear-off ribbon (3) off the relative said reel (13).

5) A method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said first pulling force (F1) is at least sufficient to unwind the continuous strip (2) off the relative said reel (7).

6) A device for feeding a continuous strip (2) of packing material and a tear -off ribbon (3) to a user machine (4), the device (1) comprising first and second supporting means (9, 15) for r espectively supporting a first and a second reel (7, 13) powered to rotate, in use, at the same peripheral speed, said first and said second reel (7, 13) being a reel (7) of said continuous strip (2) and a reel (13) of said tear -off ribbon (3); first and s econd guide means (26, 27) for respectively guiding the continuous strip (2) and the tear -off ribbon (3) along respective paths (6, 12); a joining station (23) through which both said paths (6, 12) extend; joining means (22, 24) located at said joining sta tion (23) to join the continuous strip (2) and the tear -off ribbon (3) to each other to form a composite strip (25) of packing material; and first traction means (35) which

cooperate with said composite strip (25) to transmit a first pulling force (F1) to the continuous strip (2) and the tear -off ribbon (3); and being characterized by comprising second traction means (28, 29) for exerting, simultaneously with and in addition to said first pulling force (F1), a second pulling force (F2) on a portion (36) of the tear-off ribbon (3) extending between the relative said reel (13) and the joining station (23).

7) A device as claimed in Claim 6, wherein said second traction means (28, 29) comprise a pulley (28) which cooperates with said portion (36) of tear -off ribbon (3); and drive means (29) for applying to said pulley (28) a given torque (M) in the same direction as a travelling direction of said portion (36) of tear -off ribbon (3) to said joining station (23).

8) A device as claimed in Claim 7, wherein control means (17) are provided to regulate said drive means (29) so as to impart to said pulley (28) a peripheral speed equal to said peripheral speed of said reels (7, 13) and, therefore, to a travelling speed of the tear -off ribbon (3).

9) A device as claimed i n Claim 6, wherein the sum of said first and said second pulling force (F1, F2) is a pulling force (F3) at least sufficient to unwind said tear-off ribbon (3) off the relative said reel (13).

10) A device as claimed in Claim 6, wherein said first pulling force (F1) is at least sufficient to unwind said continuous strip (2) off the relative said reel (7).